

Capsule Summary

Inventory No. WA-HAG-179

M. P. Moller Organ Works
North Prospect St.
Hagerstown
Washington County, MD
1897-1992
Access: Private

The M.P. Moller Organ Works is a three-story brick structure with metal sided frame additions built during the last five years of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. The main building faces North Prospect Avenue and occupies the entire block. The structure was built along the Cumberland Valley Railroad right of way with a siding dedicated to serve the plant. The various sections of the building represent different eras of expansion through the first part of the twentieth century corresponding with the growth of the organ building industry. The appearance of the building is seems to be unchanged since the the middle of the twentieth century. Currently the building houses various smaller companies including an organ pipe maker and a non-profit religious community aid center.

The M.P. Moller Organ Works factory building represents small-scale industry that grew up around railroad terminals at the turn of the 20th century. This type of small, light industrial employment was a pillar of the Hagerstown economy. The Moller Organ Works also exemplifies the American Dream as realized by a growing immigrant population at the turn of the century as the founder of the company came to the United States from Denmark. Its proximity to the Cumberland Valley Rail yard and direct connection to the railroad via a siding illustrates the close relationship between this industry and the railroad. At its peak, the Moller Organ Works was the largest organ manufactory in the world and produced 35% of all organs sold in the United States with the balance of sales divided between 13 smaller firms. Moller

manufactured organs not only for churches and large concert halls but also parlor organs and pianos for the home. This illustrates the growing disposable income of average American families in the early part of the 20th century. (National Register Criteria A)

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-179

1. Name of Property

(indicate preferred name)

historic M.P. Moller, Inc. (MIHP update)
other M.P. Moller Organ Works (preferred)

2. Location

street and number N. Prospect St. not for publication
city, town Hagerstown vicinity
county Washington

3. Owner of Property

(gives names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Vincent Groh
street and number 403 N. Prospect St. telephone
city, town Hagerstown state MD zip code 21740

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington Co. Courthouse liber 1080 folio 843
city, town Hagerstown tax map 308 tax parcel 543 tax ID number Unknown

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☒ Other: Hagerstown Landmarks Survey

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	1
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	1
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

1

7. Description

Inventory No. WA-HAG-179

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Description Summary

The M.P. Moller Organ Works is a three-story brick structure with metal sided frame additions built during the last five years of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. The main building faces North Prospect Avenue and occupies the entire block. The structure was built along the Cumberland Valley Railroad right of way with a siding dedicated to serve the plant. The various sections of the building represent different eras of expansion through the first part of the twentieth century corresponding with the growth of the organ building industry. The appearance of the building seems to be unchanged since the middle of the twentieth century. Currently the building houses various smaller companies including an organ pipe maker and a non-profit religious community aid center.

Description

The former M.P. Moller Organ Works occupies the land located on the west side of North Prospect Avenue and is bounded by the Cumberland Valley Railroad yard to the west, an access alley (an extension of North Street) that dead ends at the rail yard, and [street]. A rail siding dedicated to serving the company is still evident to the rear of the building. Across North Prospect Avenue and adjacent to the access alley are modest brick row houses dating to the 1920s, and to the south of the building are more industrial buildings. Little has changed in this neighborhood since the mid-twentieth century.

Viewing the Moller lot from N. Prospect Ave. and looking northwest into the lot, is the three-story brick building that served as the original factory and offices. The first phase of construction included a two-story brick building (c.1895) constructed along the rail siding and was expanded in 1900 with the addition of a third story and enlargement of the building's footprint to the frontage along N. Prospect. All subsequent additions are attached to the original c.1895 brick building. The brick portion of the building has a limestone masonry foundation, with later additions constructed of frame with concrete block foundations. Though the street curves into a dog-leg configuration, the building follows along the rail line to its rear which creates an open area to the front of the southwestern elevation that is enclosed with a chain link fence. What appears to be a recently built pole garage has been constructed in this open area.

The front of the brick structure includes an imposing façade perpendicular to North Street. It is approximately four stories tall with a stepped parapet with a gabel end. A multipaned arched window dominates the face through which one can view the large skylight in the roof. To the north of this façade is a two-story portion of the building, five bays wide with a c.1960s era concrete and metal entry. To the south extends the largest portion of the building beginning with a three-story brick portion, twenty-two bays long. The six-over-six sash windows are framed with arched openings in the brick and grouped into pairs by the placement of brick pilasters. A

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-179

Name M.P. Moller Organ Works
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 1

metal gable roof covers the entire building. Two loading bays are present in the front of the building one has a modern overhead door and the other two hung doors.

The later additions to the building were added to the south and rear and are primarily frame. The southern additions are sheathed in flat sheet metal siding, fifteen-light metal framed windows with a metal covered gable roof. These additions were built in the in the 1920s and according to the 1926 Sandborn Insurance maps have metal framing and concrete floors. The additions to the rear of the building are concentrated on the north end and are constructed out of concrete block c. 1950.

8. Significance

Inventory No. WA-HAG-179

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/	<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates 1897-1992

Architect/Builder unknown

Construction dates 1897(brick), 1900(brick), 1902(brick), c.1910(frame), c.1918(frame & brick), c.1926(frame), c.1935(metal frame), c1950 (concrete block)

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ x not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Summary of Significance

The M.P. Moller Organ Works factory building represents small-scale industry that grew up around railroad terminals at the turn of the 20th century. This type of small, light industrial employment was a pillar of the Hagerstown economy. The Moller Organ Works also exemplifies the American Dream as realized by a growing immigrant population at the turn of the century as the founder of the company came to the United States from Denmark. Its proximity to the Cumberland Valley Rail yard and direct connection to the railroad via a siding illustrates the close relationship between this industry and the railroad. At its peak, the Moller Organ Works was the largest organ manufactory in the world and produced 35% of all organs sold in the United States with the balance of sales divided between 13 smaller firms. Moller manufactured organs not only for churches and large concert halls but also parlor organs and pianos for the home. This illustrates the growing disposable income of average American families in the early part of the 20th century. (National Register Criteria A)

Historic Context

[See "Historic Industry in Mid-Maryland" prepared for the Maryland Historical Trust through the Catocin Center for Regional Studies, 2002-2003.]

The rapid expansion of the railroad in the years following the Civil War provided easier access to raw materials needed for industry as well as cheaper transportation of finished goods. The presence of the multiple rail lines belonging to the Western Maryland Railroad, Cumberland Valley Railroad and other small railroads the impetus for growth in Hagerstown. These rail lines in turn encouraged the establishment of manufactories of consumer goods that included textiles, machinery, and food products.¹

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name M.P. Moller Organ Works
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

Mathias P. Moller came to the United States from his native Denmark in 1872 at the age of sixteen. As a skilled cabinetmaker he found work in Warren, Pennsylvania where his brother lived. A year later he was employed in Erie, Pennsylvania at the Derrick & Felgemacher Reed and Pipe Organ factory where he learned the organ making trade. During the U.S. Centennial in 1876, Moller moved to Philadelphia where he established his first organ factory, a year later he moved his factory to Greencastle, Pa. In 1881, he moved for the last time to Hagerstown, Maryland. His organ factory was located near the Western Maryland Railroad at the intersection of North Potomac Street and Fairground Avenues. In 1895, this factory burned, destroying everything inside the building including many finished organs. Though the factory was drastically underinsured, Moller rebuilt at a new location on North Prospect Avenue being sure to install an automatic sprinkler system. In 1900, the factory grew with the addition of a third story and in 1902, additional buildings expanded the available floor space to 50,000 square feet.²

The building grew steadily throughout the first half of the 20th century with multiple additions to the main brick structure. Instead of matching the original structure these additions reflected the latest industrial construction methods as illustrated in the concrete-floored, metal-framed and sided pipe making rooms added in the 1920s.³

The organ business grew through the first decades of the 1900s and by 1926 employed more than 350 employees. Moller's organs were sold not only to average Americans via mailorder and locally through Moller music stores but to the United States Military Academy at West Point, the Naval Academy at Annapolis, and the Air Force Academy in Colorado and numerous churches large and small. Organ manufacturing came to a sudden halt in 1942 when the factory was dedicated entirely to war production. In collaboration with Hagerstown's Fairchild Aircraft Company, Moller produced parts for Fairchild's PT-19 Training Plane. In the space of one month the factory's workers were retrained and producing the first of the 5000 wings and bodies for Fairchild planes. In addition, Moller also manufactured training devices for the U.S. Navy Special Device section which included training gun turrets and antiaircraft gunner trainers. Immediately following WWII, Moller made church furniture until the wartime restrictions on the use tin were lifted.⁴

In the years following the war, though still a power in organ manufacturing, Moller Organ Works, did not recover its pre-depression era success. With the advent of electronic organs in the 1950s and 60s, the pipe organs made by Moller were less and less in demand. By the late 1980s, the company was an outdated monolith in need up radical updating and the Moller family decided to sell its shares to a holding company. Though the workers tried to buy out the business the company finally went bankrupt in the early 1990s. In 1992, the Moller name and records were purchased by the Allen Organ Company of Macungie, Pa. and following an auction of the contents the building was purchased by its current owner Vincent Groh.⁵

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. WA-HAG-179

Alvey III, Richard H. Wings over Hagerstown. Hagerstown, Md. 1939.

Maryland Manufacturers' War Industry Survey, Maryland War Records Division, Baltimore, Md. Original survey forms on file at the Washington County Historical Society, Hagerstown, Md.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps, microfilm collection, Western Maryland Room, Washington Co. Free Library, Hagerstown, MD

Washington County Free Library, Western Maryland Room, verical Files, Hagerstown, Md.

Williams, Thomas J.C. History of Washington County, Maryland. 1910 Reprint. Baltimore Regional Publishing Company, 1967.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 4.58

Acreage of historical setting 4.58

Quadrangle name Hagerstown, MD Quad

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Boundary is defined by Washington County tax map 308, parcel 543.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title Heidi Campbell-Shoaf, Historian

organization Paula S. Reed & Assoc., Inc.

date August 2003

street & number 105 N. Potomac St.

telephone 301.739.2070

city or town Hagerstown

state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WA-HAG-179

Name M.P. Moller Organ Works
Continuation Sheet

Number 9 Page 1

¹ Thomas J.C. Williams, History of Washington County, Maryland (Baltimore, Md.: Regional Publishing Co., 1967, reprint of the original 1910 edition), p. 432.

² Ibid. p. 1044, 1047.

³ 1897, 1904, 1910, 1918, 1926 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Hagerstown, Md., microfilm collection, Western Maryland Room, Washington County Free Library, Hagerstown, Md.

⁴ Moller, advertising pamphlet, undated, vertical files, Western Maryland Room, Washington County Free Library, Hagerstown, Md.; Moller questionnaire, Maryland Manufacturers' War Industry Survey. Maryland War Records Division, Baltimore, Md.

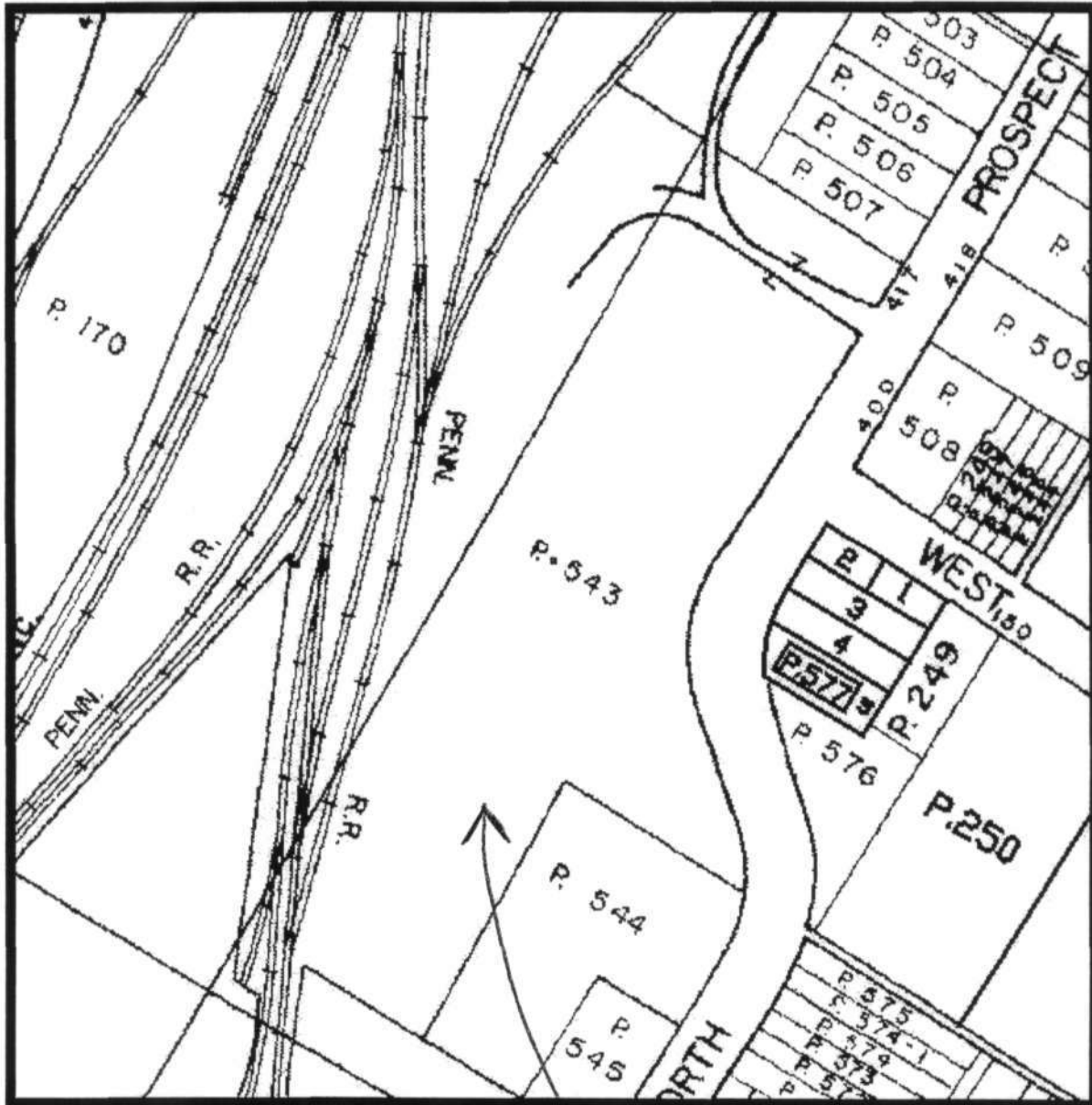
⁵ "New Life for Moller," Washington County Herald-Mail article, 1992. In vertical file of Western Maryland Room, Washington County Free Library, Hagerstown, Md.



Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation
WASHINGTON COUNTY
Real Property Data Search

Go Back
View Map
New Search

District - 25 **Account Number - 017226**

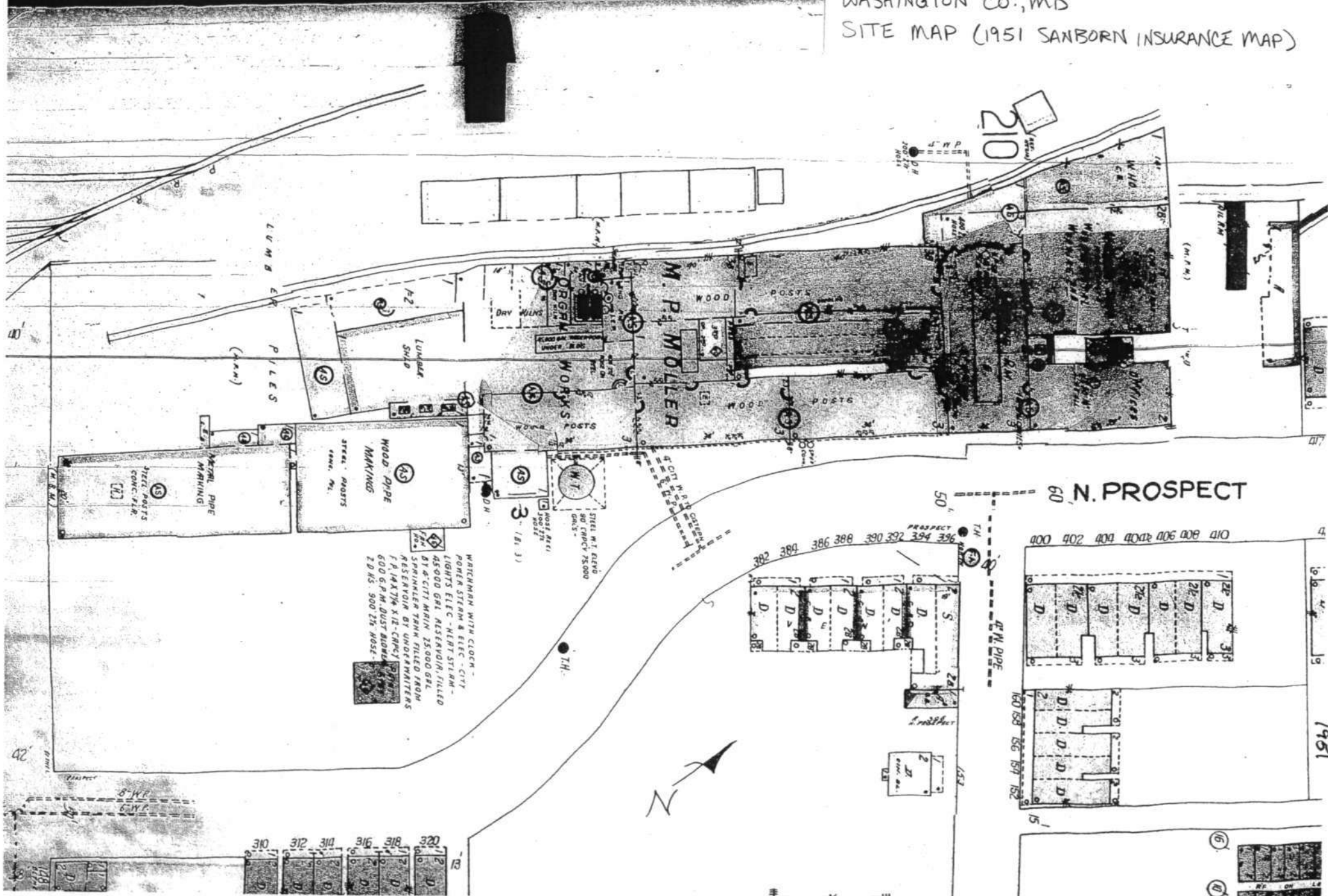


Property maps provided courtesy of the Maryland Department of Planning ©2001.
 For more information on electronic mapping applications, visit the Maryland Department of Planning
 web site at www.mdp.state.md.us/webcom/index.html

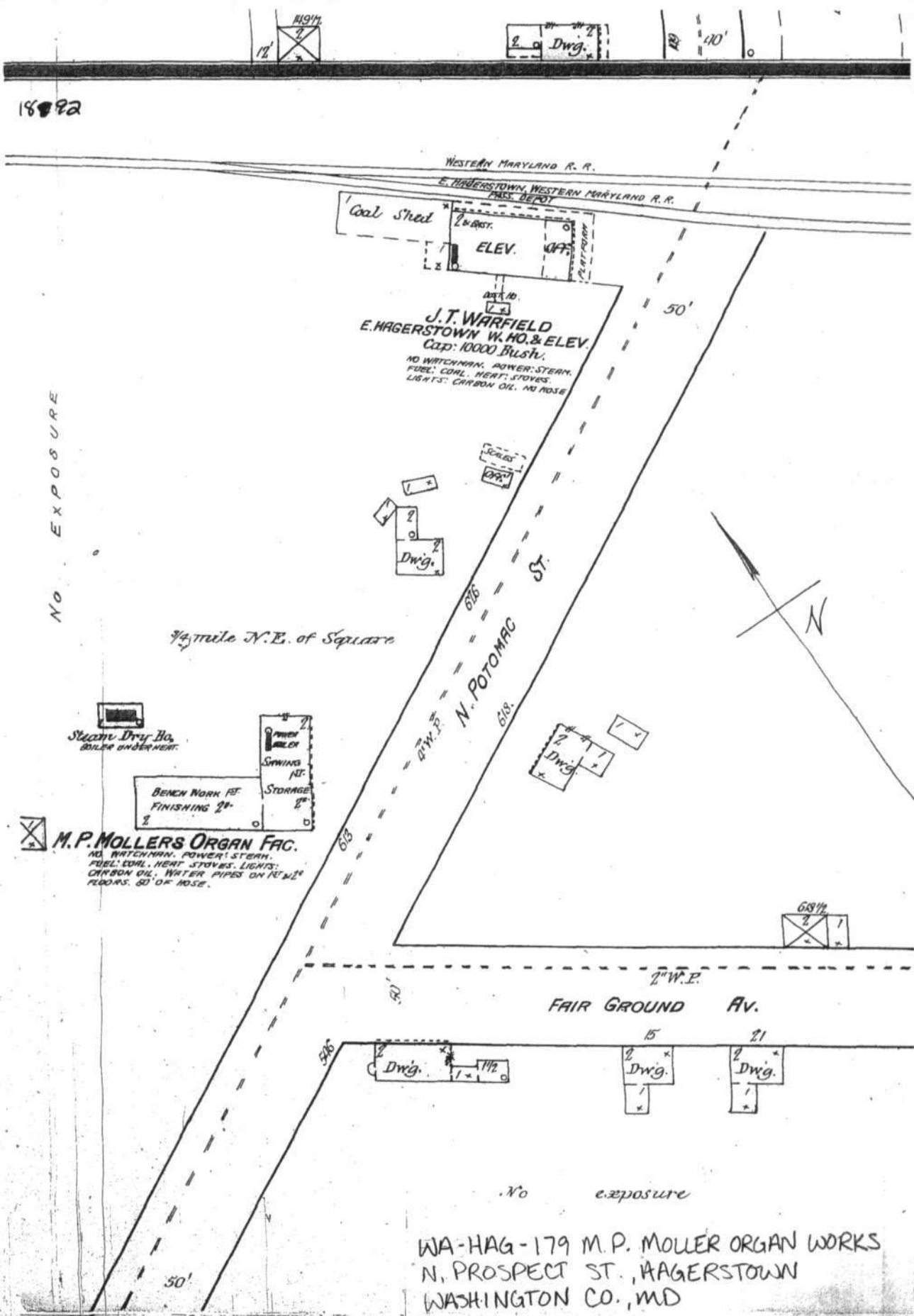
WA-HAG-179
 M.P. Moller Organ Works
 N. Prospect St., Hagerstown
 Washington Co., MD
 Tax Map 308, Parcel 543

WA-HAG-179 M.P. MOLLER ORGAN WORKS
N. PROSPECT ST., HAGERSTOWN
WASHINGTON CO., MD

SITE MAP (1951 SANBORN INSURANCE MAP)



1892



WA-HAG-179 M.P. MOLLER ORGAN WORKS
 N. PROSPECT ST., HAGERSTOWN
 WASHINGTON CO., MD
 1892 SANBORN INSURANCE CO. MAP

→ N

1910



WA-HAG-179
 M.P. MOLLER ORGAN WORKS
 N. PROSPECT ST., HAGERSTOWN
 WASHINGTON CO., MD
 1910 SANBORN FIRE
 INSURANCE CO. MAP

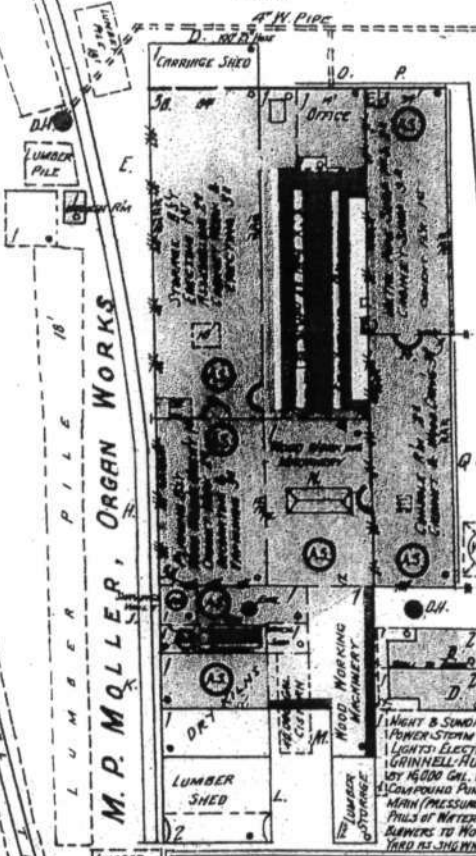
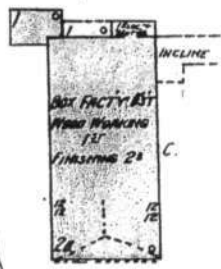
AV.

N. PROSPECT

60' 50'

W

5
 STORAGE
 H.L. COFFMAN & CO.
 WAGON WORKS & BOX FACTY
 NO WATONMAN - POWER & LIGHTS - ELEC.
 HEAT - STOVES - WATER CIGARS & PAIRS (ASTRIBO -



M.P. MOLLER, ORGAN WORKS

LUMBER PILE 10'

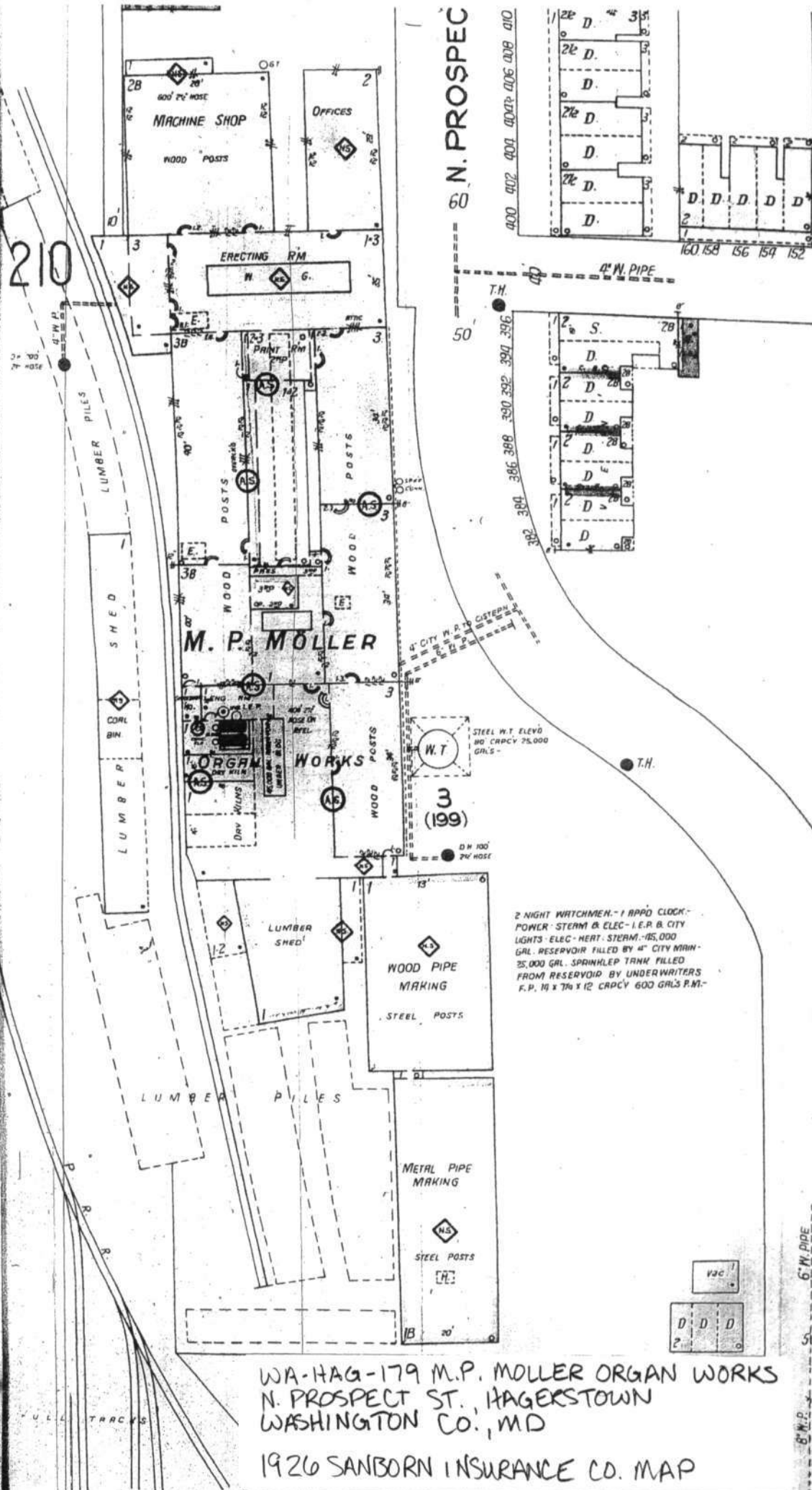
1. LIGHT & SONGRY WATONMAN - IN HAUSER CLOCK-10.5 STATIONS
 2. POWER SYSTEM - HEAT - STEAM & STURTEVANT HOT AIR STOVE
 3. LIGHTS - ELECTRIC - L.P. - FUEL - COAL & REFUEL
 4. GRINNELL - AUTO. SPRINKLERS - NET SYSTEM - SUPPLIED
 BY 15000 GAL. W.T. FLDG. 60' ON IN. TOWER - BARRI DUPLEX
 5. COMPOUND PUMP M.V. 7 1/2" CAPCY 600 GALS. HOLMAN & CITY WATER
 MAIN (PRESSURE WAGES FROM 100 TO 150 LBS) 1-10000 & 1-35000 GAL. CISTERN
 PAILS OF WATER DISTRIBUTED THROUGH PAILS OF 3000 IN. BATHING RIM
 RUNNERS TO WOOD MACHINERY - GLUE PITS HEATED BY STEAM - HEAT IN
 YARD AS SHOWN - 150' 2 1/2" HOLE AT PUMP - 300' 2 1/2" HOLE ON CART - FLOOR DROPS

C. K. R. R. YARDS

R. C. CEMETERY

1926

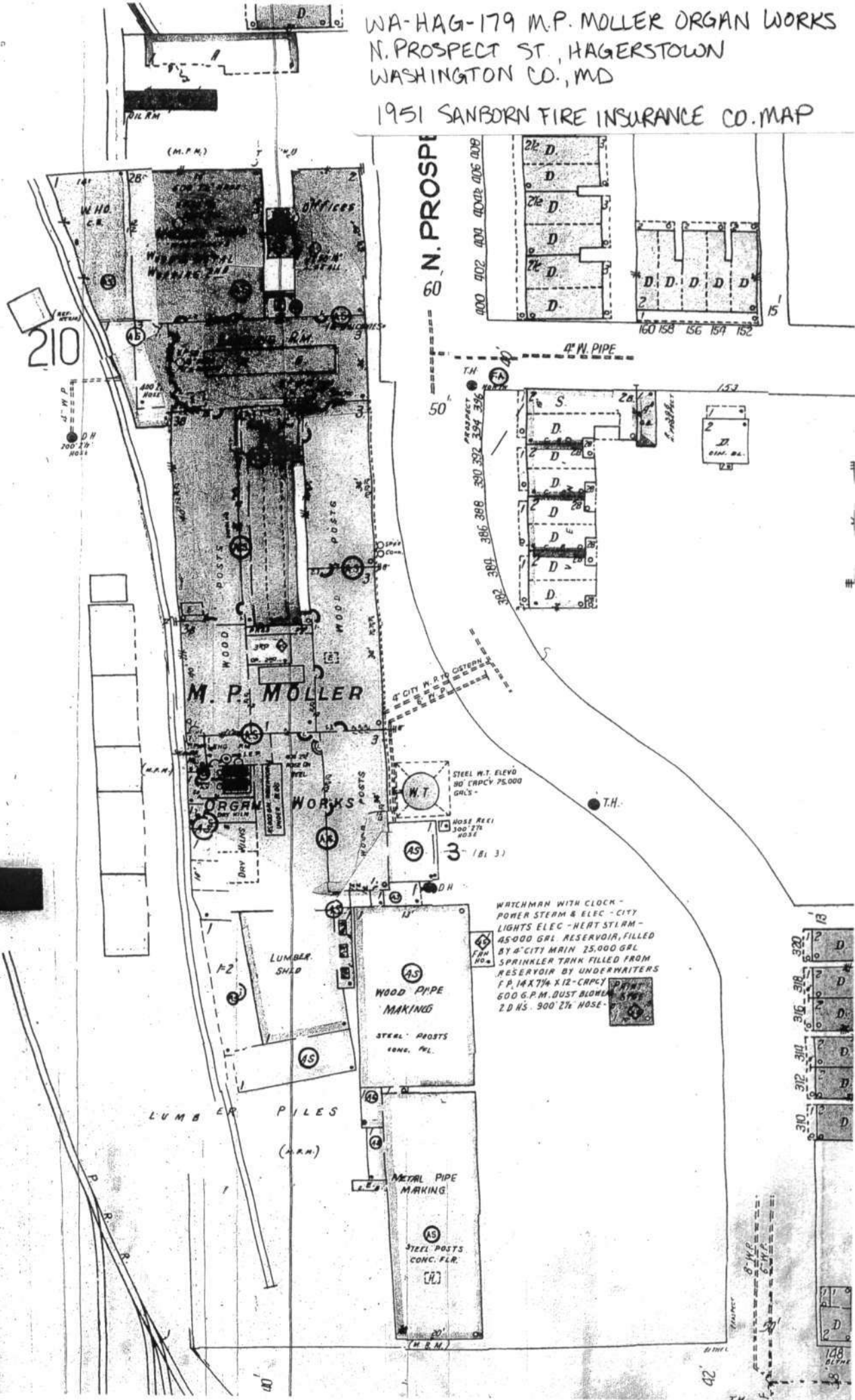
210



WA-HAG-179 M.P. MOLLER ORGAN WORKS
N. PROSPECT ST. HAGERSTOWN
WASHINGTON CO., MD

1926 SANBORN INSURANCE CO. MAP

1951 SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE CO. MAP

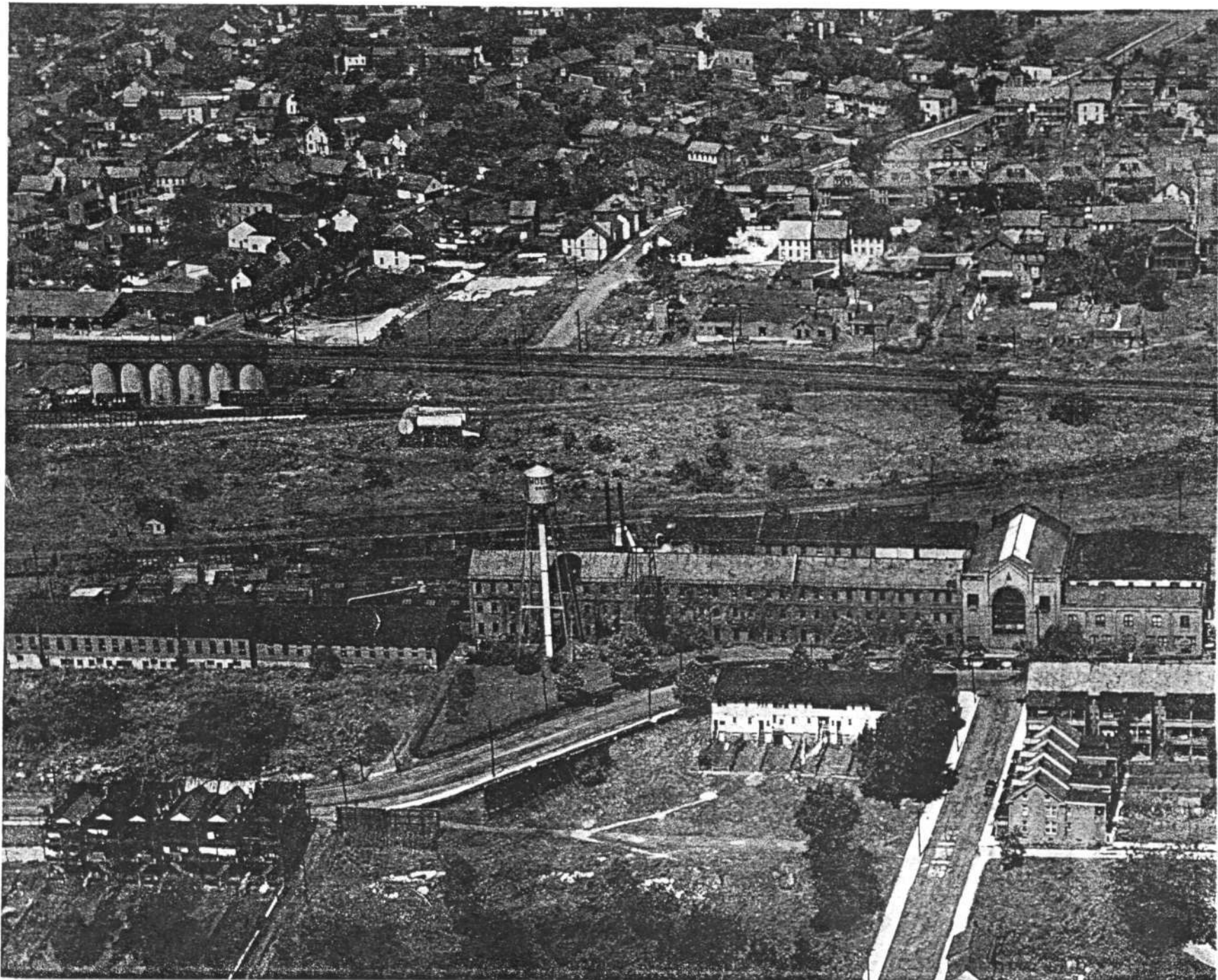


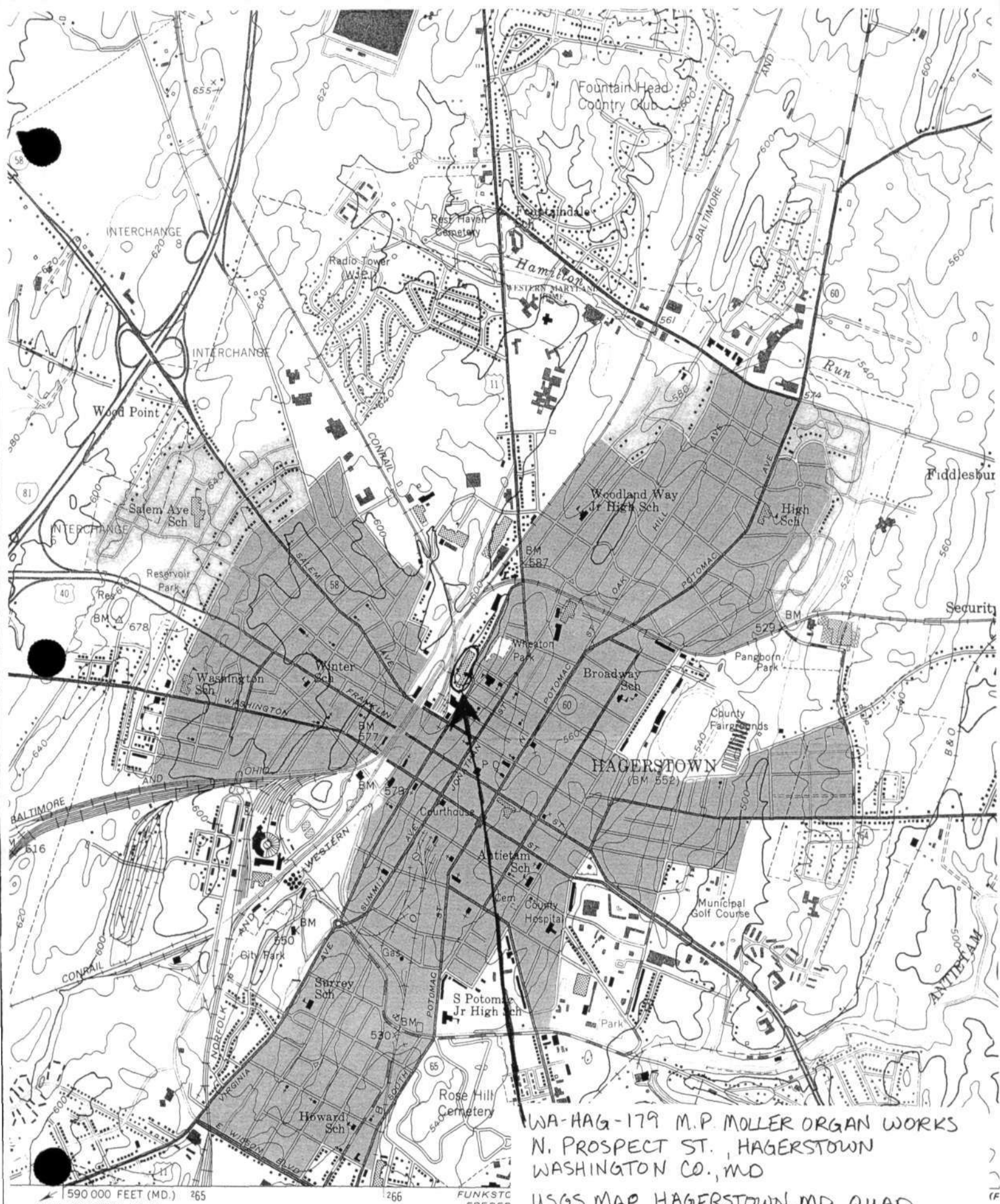
WA-HAG-179 M.P. MÖLLER ORGAN WORKS
N. PROSPECT ST, HAGERSTOWN
WASHINGTON CO., MD

FROM: Wings over Hagerstown
1939
Richard H. Alvey III

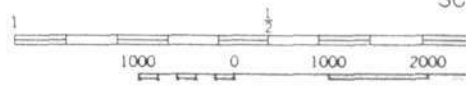
M. P. MÖLLER ORGAN WORKS

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Map prepared by the Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey
 Produced by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and USCE
 Cartography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs



SC



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M.P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St., Hagerstown

Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

E facade that faces North Street

1/13



WA-HAG-179

M. P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St., Hagerstown

Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

E elevation viewed from E side of N. Prospect St.
looking to the SW

2/13



WA-HAG-179

M.P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St. Hagerstown

Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

North elevation of Moller Organ Works

3/13



WA-HAG-179

M.P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St., Hagerstown

Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

W elevation viewed from NE

4/13



WA-HAG-179

M.P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St., Hagerstown

Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-shoaf

8/03

MDSTPO

Elevation of Moller viewed from NE corner of
property

5/
13



WA-HAG-179

M.P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St., Hagerstown

Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

view of rail siding at NW corner of property

6/13



WA-HAG-179

M.P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St., Hagerstown

Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

Auxilliary building on NW end of property W
side of RR siding

7/13



WA-HAG-179

M.P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St., Hagerstown

Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

Elevation of Moller bldg viewed from the NW
corner of property looking SE

8/13



WA-HAG-179

M.P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St., Hagerstown

Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

view of addition at NW corner of building
viewed from N

9/13



WA-HAG-179

M. P. Moller Organ Works
N. Prospect St., Hagerstown
Washington Co., MD
H. Campbell-Shoaf
8/03

MDSHPO

View of NW corner of Moller bldg showing proximity
of RR tracks to the W

10/
13



WA-HAG-179

m. P. Moller Organ Works
N. Prospect St., Hagerstown
Washington Co., MD
H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPD

Elevation of Moller bldg showing addition to
the S viewed from the NE (close up)

11/13



WA-HAG-179

M.P. Moller Organ Works
N. Prospect St. Hagerstown
Washington Co., MD
H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

SE portion of Moller bldg showing new building
in fore ground

12/
13



WA-HAG-179

M.P. Moller Organ Works

N. Prospect St., Hagerstown
Washington Co., MD

H. Campbell-Shoaf

8/03

MDSHPO

SE portion of earlier Moller bldg (brick) viewed
from across N. Prospect St. Look to W

13/13

HAGERSTOWN LANDMARKS RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties # WA-HAG-179

Property Name/Address: Moller Organ Works, 403 North Prospect St., Hagerstown, Maryland

Description/Significance: An excellent example of the industrial architecture of Hagerstown representing the city's economic boom period of the late 19th century. It is located in an elevated setting on the western edge of the Hagerstown Historic District; the extensive group of large manufacturing and office structures is highly visible from numerous vantage points within the city. The present complex is the result of multiple building campaigns spanning the period 1895-1926. The complex comprises five principal contributing resources; in addition, a variety of subsidiary structures are located on the property. The buildings are constructed of brick, and range in height from two to three stories; a variety of roof forms are represented, including gabled (with clerestory), hipped, and shed. The focus of the complex is a crenellated three-story erecting shop, constructed ca. 1920. This section fronts on North Prospect Street at the head of West North Street and is dominated by a large arched window more than two stories high. A three-story, 30-bay-wide factory building dating from the first decade of the 20th century projects to the south of the erecting shop. Two-story wings housing offices and a machine shop, constructed in the 1920s, adjoin the erecting shop to the north. Another large factory building, representing the earliest structure in the complex, constructed in 1895, is located at the rear, fronting on a railroad siding.

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

- I. Geographic Organization: Western Maryland
- II. Chronological/Developmental Period(s):
Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
- III. Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):
Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Community Planning
- IV. Resource Type
Category: Building
Historic Environment: Urban
Historic Function(s) and Use(s):
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/manufacturing facility
Known Design Source: Unknown

Form Prepared by: Peter E. Kurtze
109 Brandon Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21212
June 30, 1992

HAGERSTOWN LANDMARKS RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties # WA-HAG-179

Property Name/Address: Moller Organs Building, 403 North Prospect St., Hagerstown, Maryland

Description/Significance: An excellent example of the industrial architecture of Hagerstown representing the city's economic boom period of the late 19th century. It is located in an elevated setting on the western edge of the Hagerstown Historic District and commands a view of much of the city. The present complex is the result of a complex sequence of construction, beginning in 1880. The principal structure fronting on North Prospect Street consists of a crenellated main section, four stories high, with wings projecting from the south and north. The main section is dominated by a large arched window, more than two stories high. The south wing is three stories high and totals 30 bays wide; the southernmost ten bays represent an addition. The north wing is two stories high, and comprises five recessed panels of two bays each. A two story building with a hipped roof is located behind the north section. The detailing of the brickwork suggests that the north wing, and the southernmost ten bays of the south wing, are contemporaneous with each other.

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

- I. Geographic Organization: Western Maryland
- II. Chronological/Developmental Period(s):
Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
- III. Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):
Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Community Planning
- IV. Resource Type
Category: Building
Historic Environment: Urban
Historic Function(s) and Use(s):
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/manufacturing facility
Known Design Source: Unknown

Form Prepared by: Peter E. Kurtze
109 Brandon Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21212
August 15, 1991

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. WA-HAG-179

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Moller Organ Works

and/or common M. P. Moller, Inc.

2. Location

street & number 403 North Prospect Street n/a not for publication

city, town Hagerstown _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district _____

state Maryland _____ county Washington _____

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone no.: _____

city, town _____ state and zip code _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Courthouse liber _____

street & number 95 West Washington Street folio _____

city, town Hagerstown _____ state Maryland _____

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title n/a

date _____ ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Survey No. WA-HAG-179

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 5

The Möller Organ Works is located in an elevated setting on the western edge of the Hagerstown Historic District; the extensive group of large manufacturing and office structures is highly visible from numerous vantage points within the city. The present complex is the result of multiple building campaigns spanning the period 1895-1926. The complex comprises five principal contributing resources; in addition, a variety of subsidiary structures are located on the property. The buildings are constructed of brick, and range in height from two to three stories; a variety of roof forms are represented, including gabled (with clerestory), hipped, and shed.

The focus of the complex is a crenellated three-story erecting shop, constructed ca. 1920. This section fronts on North Prospect Street at the head of West North Street and is dominated by a large arched window more than two stories high. A three-story, 30-bay-wide factory building dating from the first decade of the 20th century projects to the south of the erecting shop. Two-story wings housing offices and a machine shop, constructed in the 1920s, adjoin the erecting shop to the north. Another large factory building, representing the earliest structure in the complex, constructed in 1895, is located at the rear, fronting on a railroad siding.

Additional descriptive information and analysis of the sequence of construction of the various elements in the complex is provided in Section 8.

8. Significance

Survey No. WA-HAG-179

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1895-ca. 1925 Builder/Architect unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Möller Organ Works is significant under criterion A, for its association with the industrial development of Hagerstown, and under criterion C, as an example of a type of industrial facility developed and expanded during the late 19th and early 20th centuries for the manufacture of pipe organs. By the early 20th century, the M. P. Möller company attained the status of the largest pipe organ manufacturer in the world, and was also among the largest employers in Hagerstown.

Mathias Peter Möller (1854-1937) was born on the island of Bjornholm, Denmark, September 29, 1854. He apprenticed to a mechanic at age 14, and emigrated to America in 1872. He began working in the factory of the Derrick Felgemaker Organ Company in Erie, Pennsylvania. The experience he gained in pipe organ design and construction enabled him to conceive an improved type of wind chest, and in 1875 he went into business for himself, using capital he had borrowed from his brother, a grocer in Greencastle, Pennsylvania. Möller converted a barn for the manufacture of pipe organs; the first organ produced in this factory was installed in the Swedish Lutheran Church in Warren, Pennsylvania. An early Möller organ was exhibited at the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia in 1876. In 1881, Governor William T. Hamilton and Senator Lewis E. McComas were instrumental in persuading Möller to relocate to Hagerstown, at the behest of a group of influential citizens who extended him an interest-free loan for a period of ten years.¹

Möller initially established his business at 615 North Potomac Street, opposite Fairground Avenue. The firm was immediately successful. Historian J. Thomas Scharf, writing the year after Möller moved to Hagerstown, described the organ maker's innovations and accomplishments:

. . . These organs combine all the late improvements and new

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WA-HAG-179

See Notes, Section 8, Page 5

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 5 acresQuadrangle name Hagerstown, MDQuadrangle scale 1:24000UTM References do NOT complete UTM referencesA

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Zone Easting NorthingB

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting NorthingC

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter E. Kurtze

organization

date June 30, 1992street & number 109 Brandon Roadtelephone (410) 296-7538city or town Baltimorestate MD 21212

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works

designs of cases, and are very elegant in finish. A novel construction of Mohler's [sic] choral pipe-organs, which is patented, is built with five sets of pipes with independent pedal base, that can be shipped to any distance without removing a single pipe, and ready for use. The reed-organs manufactured by Mr. Mohler are in very general use, and stand deservedly high, and are unsurpassed in sweetness and perfection. There is one of these pipe-organs in the German Reformed and one in the Lutheran churches, Greencastle; one in the Presbyterian church, Mercersburg; and in the First Reformed chapel, Hagerstown, and other places of worship.²

By 1887, the Möller firm was described as having "erected some very large organs in different cities, all of which have been very highly commended by competent judges."³ The 1892 Sanborn Map indicates the source of these instruments as a two-story ell-plan brick factory building in which sawing, bench work, finishing, and setting up were carried out; an addition to accommodate turning, woodworking, and painting was planned. A small, separate building functioned as a steam dry house. This plant was destroyed by fire, and the Möller Works moved to its present site on North Prospect Street in 1895.

This Potomac Street facility was modestly scaled in comparison to the company's subsequent establishment; Sanborn Maps prepared in 1897, 1904, 1910, 1918, and 1926 document the rapid expansion of the North Prospect Street plant during the first quarter of the twentieth century.⁴ The 1897 Sanborn map shows a three-story brick factory, rectangular in plan, measuring over 200 feet long by about 50 feet deep; this structure more than tripled the area of the previous plant. Assembling, erecting, cabinet work and finishing were carried out in this building, which was served by an elevator and had its own railroad siding. A dry house was located in the south end of the building, and a large lumber shed adjoined it. Additional lumber storage was provided to the west, across the railroad tracks.

By 1904, the complex had again effectively doubled in size, with a new two-story rectangular brick building constructed parallel to the 1895 factory on the east and linked to the earlier building by a large, one-story hyphen. The new facilities provided increased capacity for woodworking machinery, wood carving, cabinet work, finishing and metal pipe construction, and also included office space. In addition, a brick duplex dwelling had been added to the property southeast of the factory, and storage sheds were built across the railroad tracks. Lumber was stored in several sheds and in a series of five piles which reached a height of eighteen feet; the largest of these piles measured over 150 feet long, providing an index to the volume of organ construction anticipated by the company during this period.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works

Six years later, in 1910, the two-story factory building which had been added between 1897 and 1904 had been raised to three-story height, and the courtyard between the two principal factory wings had been infilled with a skylighted erecting room. The building also expanded to the south, to house more woodworking machinery. An aerial perspective view of the complex was published in 1911 (see attached); it generally corresponds to the information provided on the Sanborn Map of the previous year, but also shows a U-shaped lumber shed located south of the factory; only part of this structure is indicated on the 1910 map. At the time, the enterprise was described as follows:

. . . [I]n 1895, the present factory was built and it has since been enlarged five times. The present plant is equipped with the most modern machinery and every appliance found to be advantageous to the work. Möller organs have been placed in thirteen hundred churches, besides a large number of colleges, residences, lodge rooms and other institutions. Many of these instruments rank among the largest organs in America and Möller organs are now in use in every State in the Union, besides several foreign countries. Visitors to Hagerstown are invited to visit this plant where every part used in pipe organs is manufactured, and to inspect parts under construction and materials from which they are made. Every organ is designed and built specifically for the building it is to occupy and here will be found in course of construction pipe organs of all sizes. The Möller systems of Tubular-Pneumatic actions are protected by patents and on account of their simplicity and reliability are said by experts to surpass all others, but organs of this make are best known on account of their fine tone and high grade construction. One department of the factory has recently been devoted to the manufacture of organs for Schools, Colleges, Lodge Rooms, Residences and other purposes apart from church use to meet the large and increasing demand for such organs. The factory employs about 200 skilled workmen, a number of which have been employed there more than twenty years, while others came from other prominent American and European factories. . . .⁵

This description went on to list a number of institutions from New York to Michigan and as far south as South Carolina in which Möller organs had recently been installed.

By 1918, a need for still more manufacturing space caused the removal of the duplex residence, making way for a three-story extension of the factory to the southeast. Lumber storage by that time had

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works

expanded onto the property formerly held by the Roman Catholic Cemetery to the south. The final expansion of the complex took place between 1918 and 1926, when a three-story brick erecting room was constructed across the north end of the then-existing factory, directly opposite West North Street. At the same time, offices and a machine shop were constructed extending from the new erecting room to the north, and two large, one-story frame structures for the fabrication of wood and metal organ pipes were built at the southeast end of the complex, which had by then absorbed the former Roman Catholic Cemetery and extended as far south as West Bethel Street.

About a dozen full-time organ manufacturers were in business at the time of Minnick's profile of the Möller firm. By the early 20th century, the Möller Organ Works became both the largest pipe organ factory in the world and one of the largest employers in Hagerstown, with about 300 hands. In addition to the organ works, the entrepreneurial M. P. Möller owned the Dagmar hotel and produced the Dagmar automobile (both named for his daughter), operated music stores and a taxi service, and had interests in the Hagerstown Trust Company, Home Builders Building and Loan Association, Kinetic Engineering Company, and the W. H. Reisner Manufacturing Company, which produced pipe organ hardware among other products.⁶ The factory on North Prospect Street was expanded 14 times before 1925. By 1961, the firm had produced a total of some 9,000 organs over eight decades.⁷

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 5

WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works

Notes:

1. Information on the early history of the Möller Organ Works is drawn from several sources, including company literature; Rosemary Minnick, "M. P. Möller -- Maker of Majestic Instruments," undated ms., vertical files, Western Maryland Room, Washington County Library; J. William Jones, "M. P. Möller Co. Pipes Up the World," Baltimore News-American, April 15, 1973, Sec. F, pp. 1, 8; J. Thomas Scharf, History of Western Maryland. orig. pub. Philadelphia, 1882; rpt. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1968, p. 1178; and T. J. C. Williams, Hagerstown. An Illustrated Description of the City of Hagerstown, Maryland. Hagerstown: The Mail Publishing Co., 1887, p. 56.

2. Scharf, p. 1178.

3. T. J. C. Williams, Hagerstown: An Illustrated Description of the City of Hagerstown, Maryland. Hagerstown: The Mail Publishing Co., 1887, p. 56.

4. The following discussion of the development of the Möller Organ Works is derived from analysis of maps of Hagerstown produced by the Sanborn Map Company of New York, available at the Library of Congress or on microfilm at the Maryland State Archives, Annapolis.

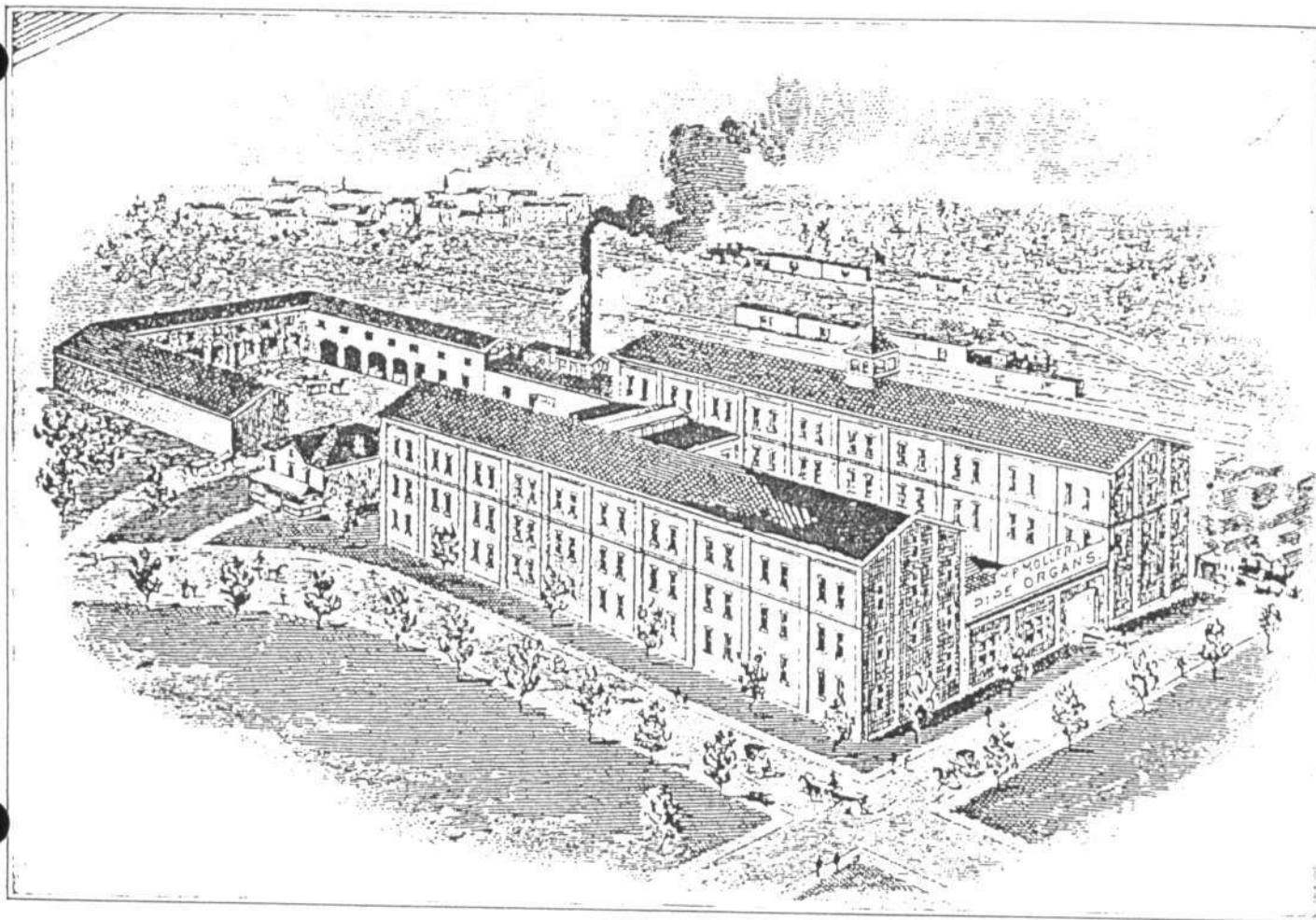
5. Clarence E. Weaver, Story of Hagerstown, Maryland. Hagerstown: Mail Publishing Co., 1911, p. 17.

6. Writers Press Association, Advance Press Service, April 20, 1935; copy in vertical file, Western Maryland Room, Washington County Library. Also see Weaver, p. 13.

7. Baltimore Sun, April 2, 1961, p. 5.

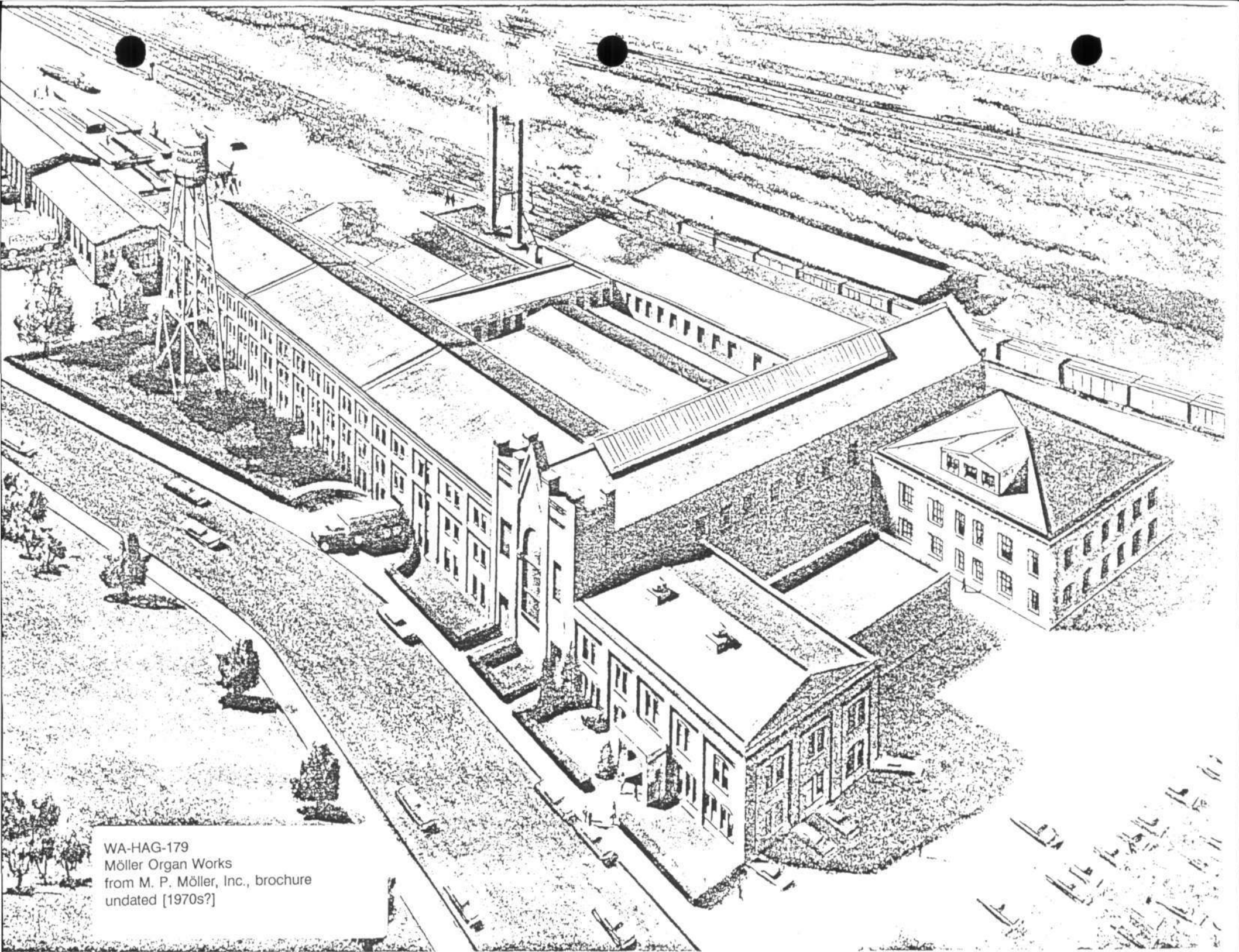
Also see the following sources:

M. P. Möller, Inc. brochures in vertical files, Western Maryland Room, Washington County Library; vertical files, Maryland Room, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore; vertical files, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore.



M. P. Moller Pipe Organ Factory.

WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works, ca. 1911
from Clarence E. Weaver,
Story of Hagerstown (1911), p. 17.



WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works
from M. P. Möller, Inc., brochure
undated [1970s?]

**M. P. MÖLLER
PIPE ORGAN FACTORY**

ONE NIGHT & SUNDAY WATCHMAN -
ONE MINOR PORTABLE CLOCK -
RD. STATIONS - 300' 25" HOSE -
POWER STEAM, WHICH IS KEPT UP CONSTANTLY
GLUE HEATED BY STEAM - FUEL SHAVINGS
& REFUSE - HEAT IN BLDG & DRYKILN HOT AIR
STURTEVANT H.T. AIR FAN -
SEVEN BOLS & SEVEN PAILS DISTRIBUTED -
GRINNELL SPRINKLERS (AUT) THRO. OUT -
SUPPLIED BY CITY PRESSURE, 15 POUNDS
ONE BARR OIL ACTING FIRE PUMP - CAP 300 GAL. MIN.
SPRINKLER ATTACHED TO FIRE PUMP -

R. C. CEMETERY

WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works
Sanborn Map Company
Fire Insurance Maps of Hagerstown, 1897

Scale of Feet.

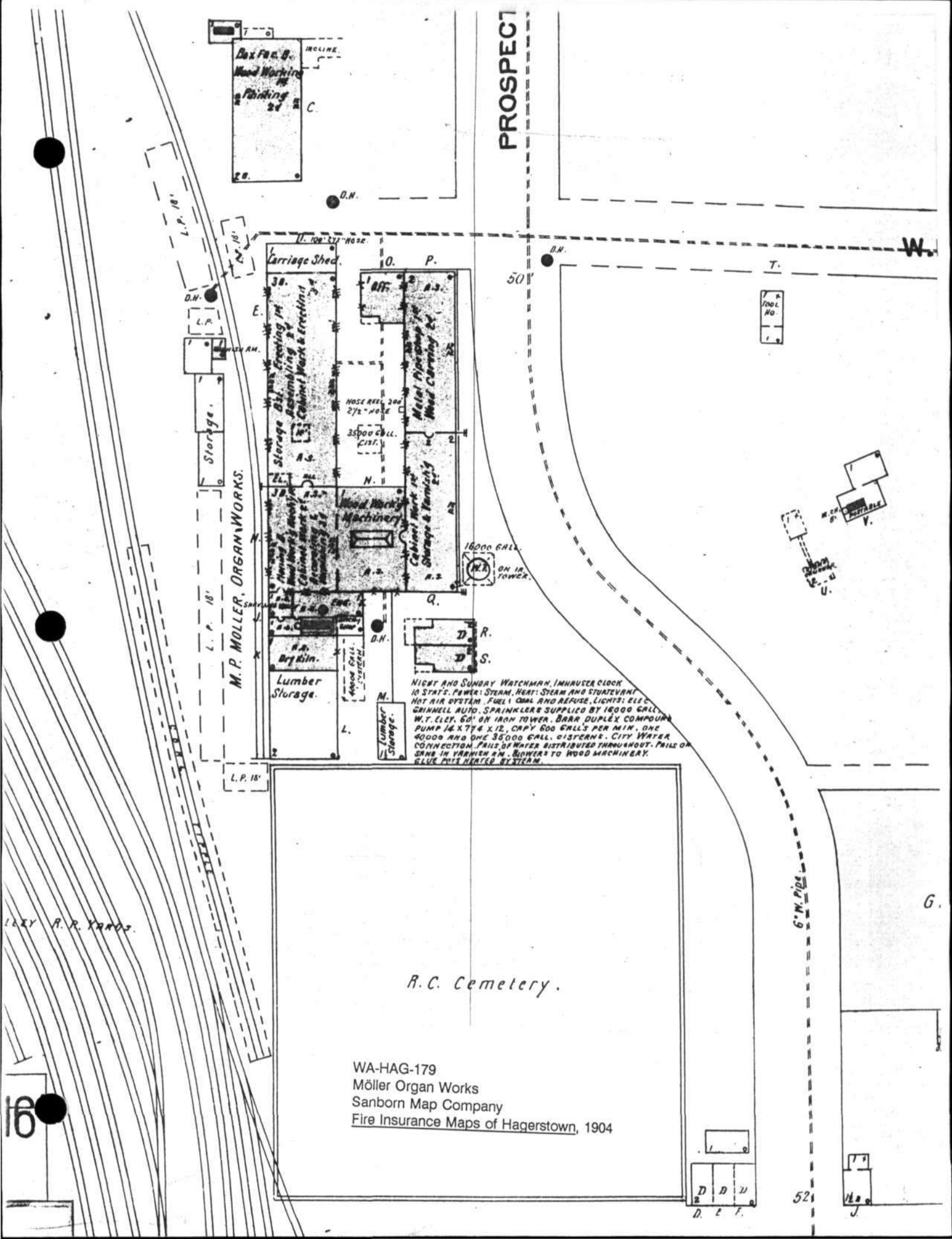
30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 150

GRAYE

GRANITE HALL

FERTILIZING N. NO. 1

CLEVELAND VALLEY R.R. YARDS



PROSPECT

M.P. MOLLER, ORGAN WORKS.

NIGHT AND SUNDAY WATCHMAN, INHAUSER CLOCK
10 STAS. POWER: STEAM, HEAT: STEAM AND STOVEVANT
HOT AIR SYSTEM. FUEL: COAL AND REFUSE. LIGHTS: ELEC
GRINNELL AUTO. SPRINKLERS SUPPLIED BY 16000 GALL.
W.T. ELEV. 60' ON IRON TOWER. BARR DUPLEX COMPOUND
PUMP 14 X 7 1/2 X 12, CAPY 600 GALLS PER MIN. ONE
40000 AND ONE 35000 GALL. CISTERNS. CITY WATER
CONNECTION. PAILS OF WATER DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT. PAILS OF
SAND IN VARNISH RM. BLOWERS TO WOOD MACHINERY.
GLUE POTS HEATED BY STEAM.

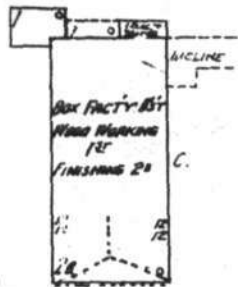
R.C. Cemetery.

WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works
Sanborn Map Company
Fire Insurance Maps of Hagerstown, 1904

1
D D W
D E F

52

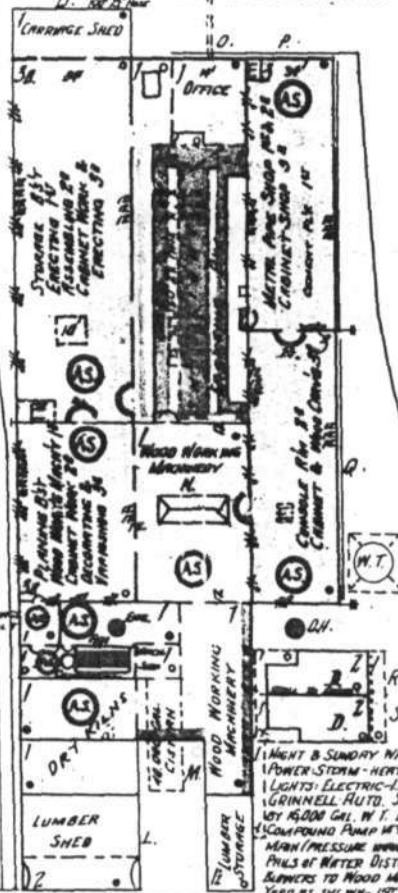
H. L. COFFMAN & CO.
WAGON WORKS & BOX FACTY
NO. WATCHMAN - POWER & LIGHTS. ELEC.
HEAT - STOVES - WATER CRANKS & PAILS (DISTRIB.)



N. PROSPECT

W. NORTH

M. P. MÖLLER, ORGAN WORKS



WATER & SUNDAY WATCHMAN - IN-HOUSE CLOCK-10 STATIONS -
POWER - STEAM - HEAT - STEAM & STURTEVANT HOT AIR SYSTEM -
LIGHTS - ELECTRIC - L.P. - FUEL - COAL & REFUSE -
GRINNELL AUTO. SPRINKLERS - VICT SYSTEM - SUPPLIED
BY 15000 GAL. W.T. FIELD 60" ON 10" W.P. - BIRD DUMPEY
MAIN PRESSURE PUMP 15" X 12" CAPACITY 600 GALS. PER MIN. - CITY WATER
PAILS OF WATER DISTRIBUTED THROUGH PAILS OF SAND IN WASH RM. -
BURNERS TO WOOD MACHINERY - GLUE POTS HEATED BY STEAM - HYD. IN
YARD AS SHOWN - 150' X 75' HOLE AT PUMP - 300' X 75' HOLE IN CART - FLOOR DRENCH

R. C. C E M E T E R Y

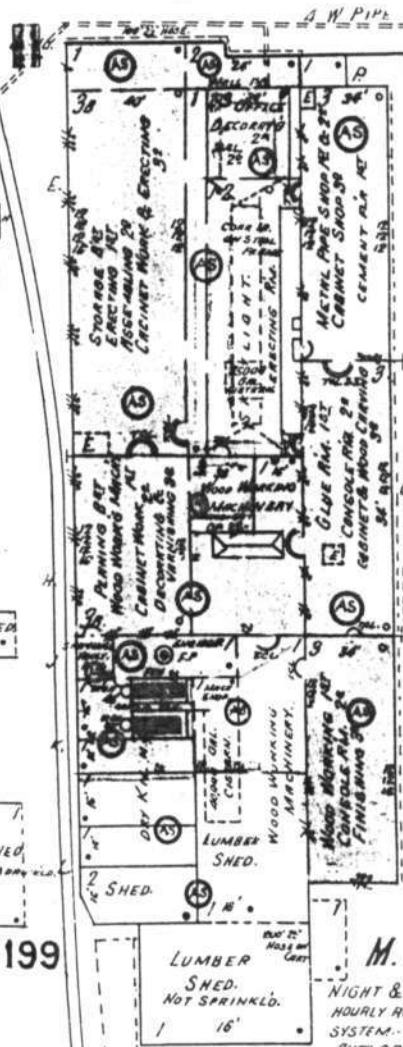
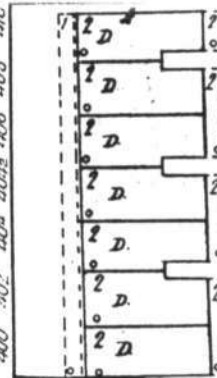
WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works
Sanborn Map Company
Fire Insurance Maps of Hagerstown, 1910

H.L. COFFMAN & CO. PLANING MILL & LUMBER YARD

NO WATCHMAN - POWER & LIGHTS ELEC.
HEATS OVEN WINTER CASES ON PILES 11-17



PROSPECT (N. PROSPECT)



M.P. MOLLER, ORGAN WORKS

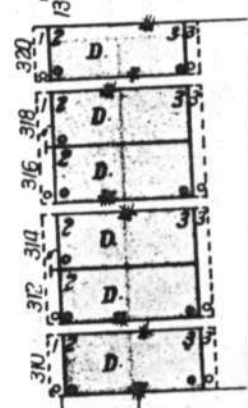
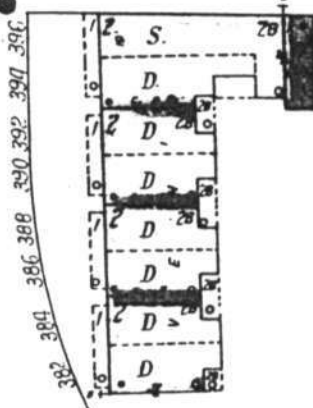
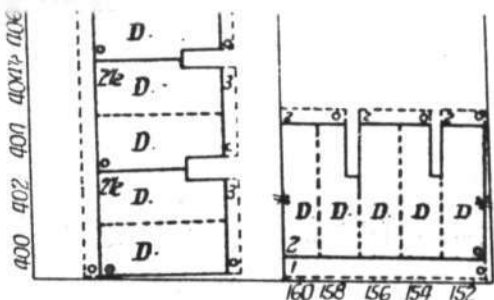
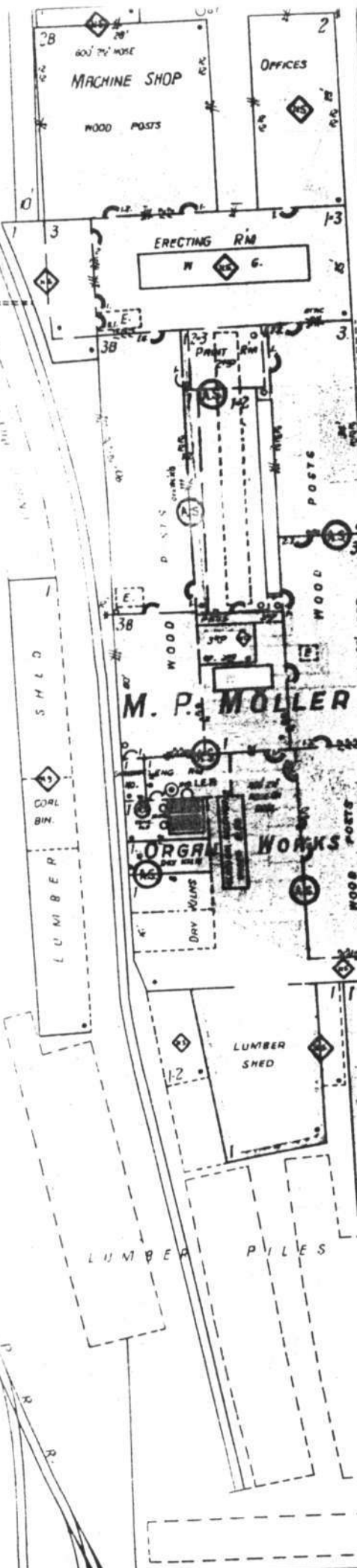
NIGHT & SUNDAY WATCHMAN - IMHUSER CLOCK - 12 STATIONS
HOURLY ROUNDS - POWER STEAM - HEAT - STEAM & STURTEVANT HOT AIR
SYSTEM - LIGHTS ELECTRIC - 1EP FUEL (OIL & KEROSENE - GRINNELL
AUTO SPRINKLERS - WET & DRY SYSTEM - SUPPLIED BY 16000 GAL WT
ELEV 63' ONIA TOWER - & 25000 GAL WT ELEV 82' HEADS SPACED 8' x 8'
BARR DUPLEX COMPOUND PUMP 14" x 14" x 12" CAPCY 600 GALS PER MIN
& CITY WATER MAIN PRESSURE VARIES FROM 22 TO 115 LBS.
1 - 40000 & 1 - 35000 GAL CISTERNS - PAILS OF WATER DISTRIBD.
THRO'OUT - PAILS OF SAND IN VARNISH RM. BLOWERS TO
WOOD MACHINERY - GLUE POTS HEATED BY STEAM - HTQS. IN YARD
AS SHOWN - 50' 2" HOSE AT PUMP - 200' 2" HOSE ON CART FLOOR OPENGS
PROTECTED

WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works
Sanborn Map Company
Fire Insurance Maps of Hagerstown, 1918



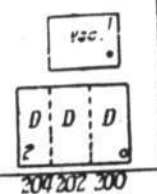
210

N. PROS
60

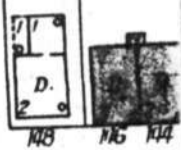


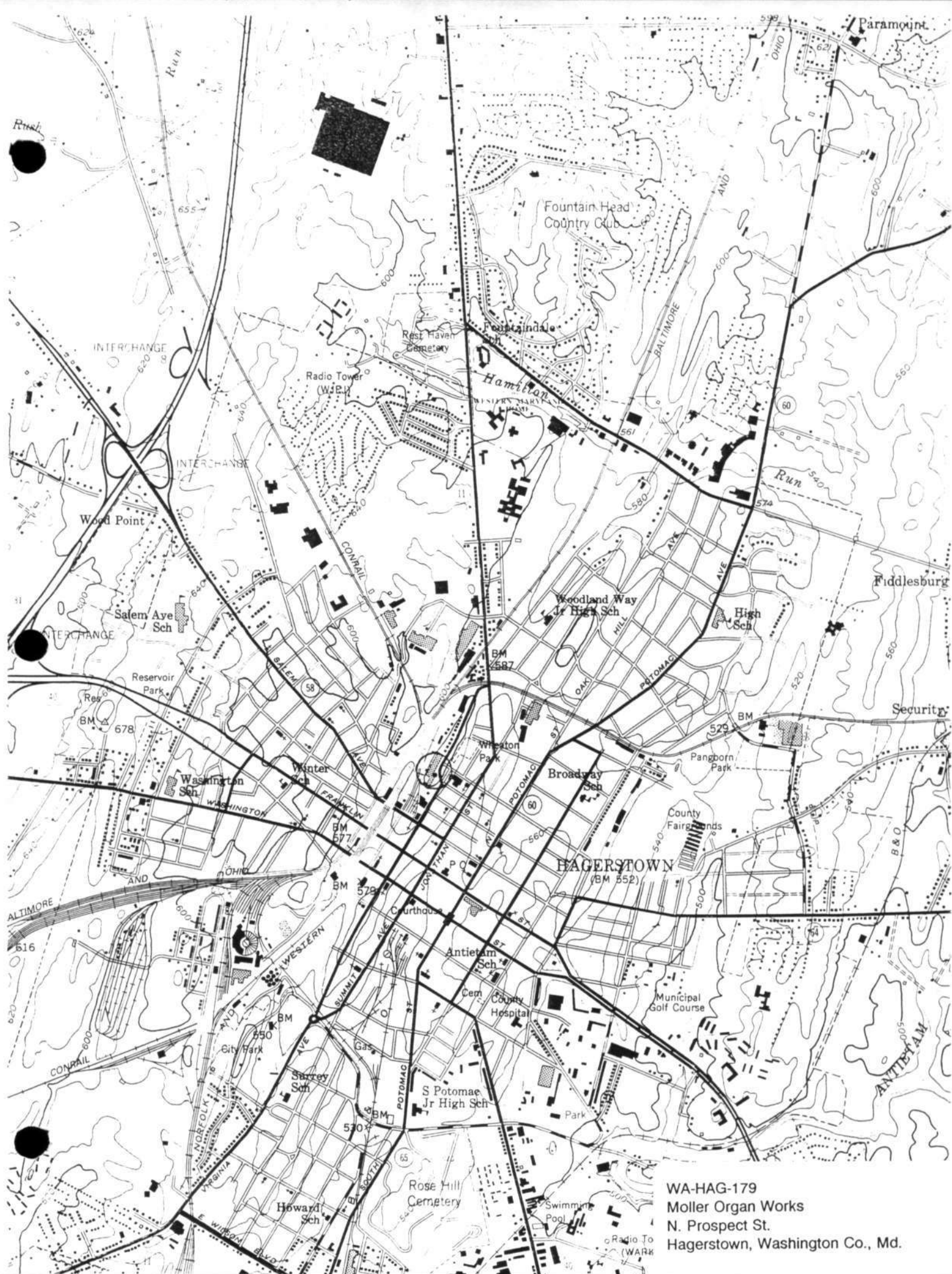
2 NIGHT WATCHMEN - 1 APPROX. CLOCK-
POWER - STEAM & ELEC - I.E.P. & CITY
LIGHTS - ELEC - HEAT - STEAM - 145,000
GAL. RESERVOIR FILLED BY 4" CITY MAIN -
25,000 GAL. SPRINKLED TANK FILLED
FROM RESERVOIR BY UNDERWRITERS
F.P. 14 x 7 1/2 x 12 CAPCY 600 GALS P.M.

WA-HAG-179
Möller Organ Works
Sanborn Map Company
Fire Insurance Maps of Hagerstown, 1926

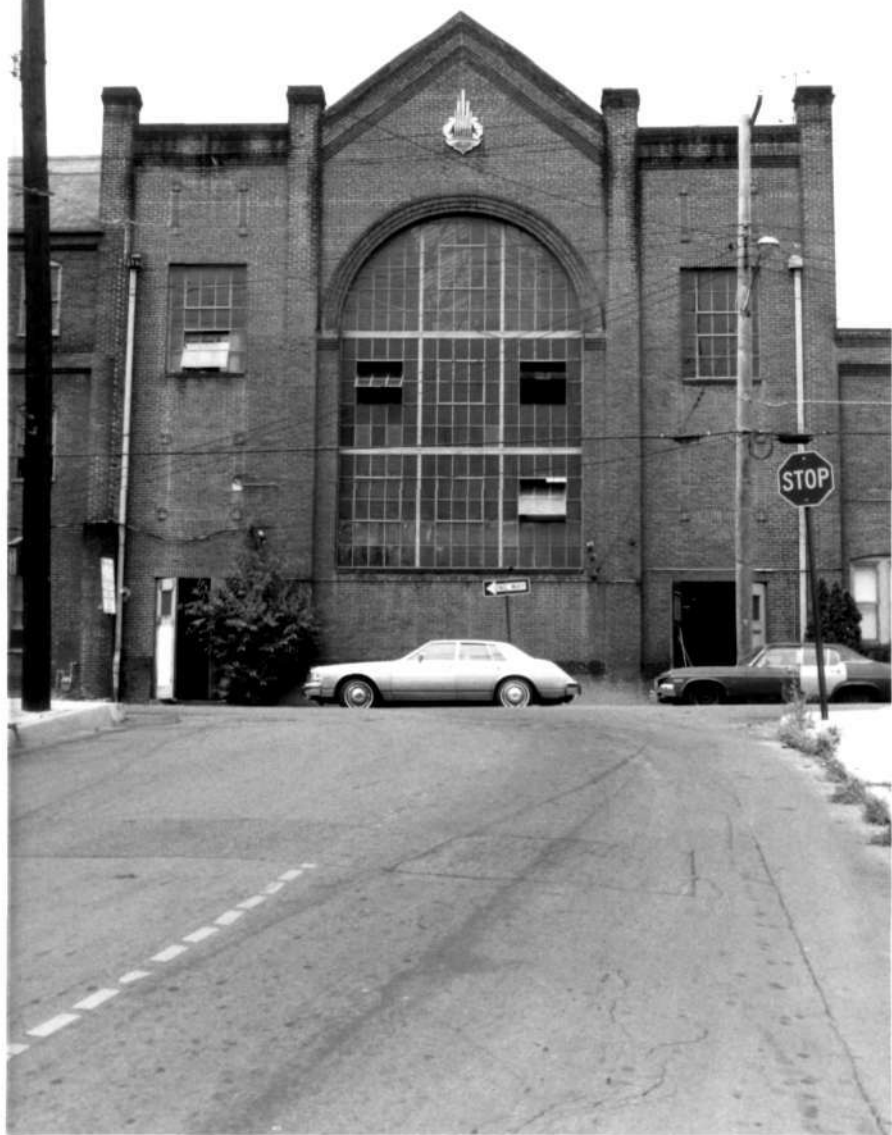


6" N. PIPE
50





WA-HAG-179
Moller Organ Works
N. Prospect St.
Hagerstown, Washington Co., Md.



WPA 4AG-119

MOLLER ORGAN WORKS

HAGERSTOWN MD

7/91 2 KONTZEE

VIEW FROM EAST